CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for a computer application with operational control, in which overall operation is made up of sub-operations, by means of calling subroutines and methods of an object-oriented programming environment, comprising:

determining the next subroutine to be executed in each case by evaluating the result of a query that is sent via a data network.

2.   The method as described Claim 1 wherein the query includes the contents of a state variable.

3.   The method as described in Claim 1 wherein the query includes the result of one or more preceding functions.

4.   The method as described in Claim 1 wherein the subroutine or method is specified dynamically or loaded by a dynamic loader.

5.   The method as described in Claim 1 wherein the subroutine or the method is loaded via a data network.

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6. A method of controlling an application program for communicating information over a network between a client and a server, the application program having a previous state and a current state, comprising:

storing at least two methods on the server;

at the server, receiving a request having a state indicator indicative of the previous state of the application program;

selecting one of the at least two methods based upon the state indicator; and

transmitting the requested method to the client.

7. The method of Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting includes appending the state indicator to a shell identifier such that a unique one of the methods is identified.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the step of selecting further includes selecting the unique one of the methods.

9. The method of Claim 6 wherein the request is received from the client.

10. The method of Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting includes input error checking.

11. The method of Claim 6 wherein the at least two methods are selected from the group of applets, Web pages, executable functions, and evaluation functions.

12. The method of Claim 6 wherein the state indicator is indicative of a calling function from which the request originated.

13. The method of Claim 8 wherein a chain function appends the state indicator to the shell identifier

14. A system for controlling an application program that communicates information over a network between a client and a server, comprising:

the server including a previous subroutine and at least two other subroutines;

an automatic switch, responsive to a client request having a designator indicative of the previous subroutine, to select one of the other subroutines based upon the designator; and

the server activating the selected subroutine.

15. The system of Claim 14 wherein the subroutine is selected from the group of Web pages, applets, and functions.

16. The system of Claim 14 wherein the automatic switch includes:

a chain function for appending the designator to a shell identifier such that a unique one of the subroutines is identified.

17. The system of Claim 16 wherein the automatic switch further includes a shell for selecting the unique one of the subroutines.

18. The system of Claim 16 wherein the automatic switch further includes an input error checker.

19. A method of controlling an application program for communicating information over a network between a client and a server, the application program having a previous state and a current state, comprising:

storing at least two methods on the server;

at the server, receiving a client request having a designator indicative of the previous state of the application program;

error checking the client request;

selecting one of the at least two methods based upon the designator;

appending the state indicator to a shell identifier such that a unique one of the methods is identified;

selecting the unique one of the methods based upon the state indicator; and

transmitting the requested method to the client.

20. The method of Claim 19 wherein the at least two methods are selected from the group of applets, Web pages, executable functions, and evaluation functions.